

credentials, is authorized to examine and test to the extent necessary any civil or public aircraft (as specified in § 830.5), aircraft engine, propeller, appliance, or property aboard such aircraft involved in an accident in air commerce.

(c) *Surface.* (1) Any employee of the Board, upon presenting appropriate credentials, is authorized to test or examine any vehicle, vessel, rolling stock, track, pipeline component, or any part of any such item when such examination or testing is determined to be required for purposes of such investigation.

(2) Any examination or testing shall be conducted in such a manner so as not to interfere with or obstruct unnecessarily the transportation services provided by the owner or operator of such vehicle, vessel, rolling stock, track, or pipeline component, and shall be conducted in such a manner so as to preserve, to the maximum extent feasible, any evidence relating to the transportation accident, consistent with the needs of the investigation and with the cooperation of such owner or operator.

[53 FR 15847, May 4, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 40113, Aug. 7, 1995]

§ 831.10 Autopsies.

The Board is authorized to obtain, with or without reimbursement, a copy of the report of autopsy performed by State or local officials on any person who dies as a result of having been involved in a transportation accident within the jurisdiction of the Board. The investigator-in-charge, on behalf of the Board, may order an autopsy or seek other tests of such persons as may be necessary to the investigation, provided that to the extent consistent with the needs of the accident investigation, provisions of local law protecting religious beliefs with respect to autopsies shall be observed.

§ 831.11 Parties to the field investigation.

(a) The investigator-in-charge may, on behalf of the Director, Bureau of Accident Investigation, or the Director, Bureau of Field Operations, designate parties to participate in the field investigation. Parties to the field investigation

shall be limited to those persons, government agencies, companies, and associations whose employees, functions, activities, or products were involved in the accident or incident and who can provide suitable qualified technical personnel to actively assist in the field investigation.

(b) Participants in the field investigation shall be responsive to the direction of the appropriate Board representative and may be relieved from participation if they do not comply with their assigned duties or if they conduct themselves in a manner prejudicial to the investigation.

(c) No party to the field investigation designated under § 831.9(a) shall be represented by any person who also represents claimants or insurers. Failure to comply with this provision shall result in loss of status as a party.

(d) Section 701(g) of the Federal Aviation Act of 1985, as amended, provides for the appropriate participation of the Administrator in Board investigations, and section 304(a) of the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974, as amended, provides for the appropriate participation of other Federal agencies in Board investigations. Thus, components of the Department of Transportation, and, when appropriate, other Federal agencies, will normally be a party to field investigations and will have the same rights and privileges and be subject to the same limitations as other parties.

§ 831.12 Access to and release of wreckage, records, mail, and cargo.

(a) Only the Board's accident investigation personnel and persons authorized by the investigator-in-charge, the Director, Bureau of Accident Investigation, or the Director, Bureau of Field Operations to participate in any particular investigation, examination or testing shall be permitted access to wreckage, records, mail, or cargo which is in the Board's custody.

(b) Wreckage, records, mail, and cargo in the Board's custody shall be released by an authorized representative of the Board when it is determined that the Board has no further need of such wreckage, mail, cargo, or records.